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(54) Title: SESSION KEY MANAGEMENT FOR PUBLIC WIRELESS LAN SUPPORITING MULTIPLE VIRTUAL OPERATORS

(57) Abstract: A method and apparatus for managing a session key for allowing a mobile terminal to access a wireless local area network (WLAN). The invention provides for establishing a first secure channel between an access point and a virtual operator, and suggesting a session key to the virtual operator from the access point. A second secure channel is established between the virtual operator and a user, and the session key is sent to the user via the second secure channel upon successful user authentication. The mobile terminal accesses the WLAN using the session key.